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GIULIA BONACCI, Institut de recherche pour le développement

Review

HENRI MÉDARD, MARIE-LAURE DERAT, THOMAS VERNET, and MARIE
PIERRE BALLARIN, eds, *Traites et esclavages en Afrique orientale
et dans l'Océan Indien*

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by Alessandro Bausi

in cooperation with

Bairu Tafla, Ludwig Gerhardt, Susanne Hummel,
Alexander Meckelburg, and Siegbert Uhlig

Editorial Team

Susanne Hummel, Francesca Panini

ical paradigm that guided Haberland's approach in attempting to reconstruct how 'history really was'. This undertaking—to decipher the history of the 'people without history'—yielded enormous knowledge of certain aspects of the past, but neglected any attempt to understand their present, a fact that is bemoaned by the Ethiopian collaborators in their engagement with the manuscripts. The late Braukämper, mission participant from the 1970s onwards, asserted from an emic perspective the male bias of the Frobenius expeditions. The best informants for the cultural-historical approach of the Frobenius team were seen to be elderly men, who were taken as 'guardians of historical traditions and cultural heritage' (p. 61). He emphasized the focus of the Frobenius mission as based on empirical fieldwork and detached from contemporary theoretical discussions. Nonetheless, Braukämper concludes, all Frobenius members were of the opinion that emic and etic perspectives yielded some form of objective results.

Seeking out wise old men is an important homage to, and appreciation of, the pioneering German contribution to the study of southern Ethiopia and its people. The discussion of its shortcomings, between appreciation and critique, places the book at the centre of an important larger discussion about German ethnology in the round. Opening the archives for critical discussion and engagement with Ethiopian scholars is an important step in decolonizing the otherwise hegemonic knowledge on non-European peoples.

Alexander Meckelburg, Universität Hamburg

HENRI MÉDARD, MARIE-LAURE DERAT, THOMAS VERNET, and MARIE PIERRE BALLARIN, eds, *Traites et esclavages en Afrique orientale et dans l'Océan Indien*, *Esclavages* (Paris: Karthala–Centre International de Recherches sur les Esclavages, 2013). 522 pp. Price: €34.00. ISBN: 978-2-8111-0931-4.

'Freedom', 'enslavement', 'abolition', 'kinship', and 'strangers' are some of the concepts and experiences explored in this ground-breaking book that covers a very large region, from the Arabian Peninsula and the Horn of Africa, to the Swahili coast and its hinterlands, and the islands of the Indian Ocean. This geographical zone covers areas of extraction and departure of enslaved people, areas of their consumption, and only a part of the areas where they arrive. It has the advantage of creating a dialogue between regions not usually studied together, and to 'open' Africanist knowledge on the historical dynamics of the Indian Ocean. It is published in a collection

that focuses on the many systems of slavery and slave trade, and it counterbalances the usual focus on Atlantic slavery, as well as the dominant use of English in global slavery studies. The idea put forward (p. 17) of a continuum of meaning between the terms concerning slavery, kinship, and patronage—rather than fixed words and meanings—aptly conveys the legal pluralism at work, the range of historical sources, and the linguistic diversity inherent to such a comparative approach.

The scope of the volume is to be commended as the fourteen papers or case studies are firmly tied together by a general presentation masterly conducted by Henri Médard in the first two chapters. The first of these presents and discusses the historiography of slavery and slave trade in East Africa and the Indian Ocean by following major themes: the dominance of British archives, the relevance of the Atlantic model, the dynamics of abolition, resistance and transformation, and the complexity of social identities (including ethnicity, gender, and diaspora). The historiography of most regions is discussed as well (the ‘Arab’ trade, the Swahili coast, Mozambique, the Cape colony, Madagascar, Mascarene Islands, and Seychelles) except for Ethiopia where it is only very recently that this historiography has been assessed.¹ The second chapter traces the contours of a history of slavery and the slave trade in the region under study since antiquity up to modern times. The contemporary legacies of slavery are not the main focus of this volume, and the processes of racialization, racism, national and international migrations, as well as child and domestic labour are mentioned briefly. Despite its limitation regarding recent times, this chapter should be mandatory reading for all students of African history.

The second part of the book presents four chapters focusing on Ethiopia and the Horn, and this is rare enough to be underscored. Marie-Laure Derat uses hagiographies of saints from the fifteenth and sixteenth century to re-evaluate the involvement of Christians in a slave trade controlled by Muslims. For the nineteenth century, Laury Belrose brings in oral history and the memory of enslaved men and women in order to illustrate how the slave trade was an institutionalized network with negotiators, markets, itineraries, and local governments’ support. Arnaud Kruczynski demonstrates how, during the second half of the nineteenth century, the term ‘guragué’—that designates a slave-producing peripheral region of southern Ethiopia—became a label used to designate a large proportion of the slaves sold in the

¹ For a concise introduction to the historiography of slavery and slave trade in Ethiopia, see G. Bonacci and A. Meckelburg, ‘Revisiting Slavery and the Slave Trade in Ethiopia’, *Northeast African Studies*, 17/2 (2017), 5–30.

highlands and beyond. The fourth chapter by Colette Dubois is a groundbreaking piece on the slave trade in Djibouti where she assesses the output of the slave routes originating in Ethiopia. At the end of the nineteenth century, the port of Tadjoura was very active and it remained so until the 1930s albeit slave trade was then clandestine, evidence of the duplicity of the abolitionist agenda of colonial France.

The third part of the book consists of six chapters that take the reader on a complex journey along the eastern coast of Africa. Yet another groundbreaking chapter is written by Florence Pabiou-Duchamp, who, on the basis of Portuguese sources, studies the sixteenth-century slavery and slave trade taking place in the colony of Mozambique. Thomas Vernet meticulously studies the role of slaves in agricultural practices on the coast before the nineteenth-century peak in slave trading. He also insists on the thin and often blurred line between slavery and dependency, giving particular attention to Pemba and Zanzibar. Distinct maroon communities developed on the Kenya coast during the nineteenth century, where Justin Willis questions the identity and the culture of the runaway slaves or *watoro* and their relation to the hegemonic culture of their masters. He underscores other patterns: a degree of integration in sites of missionary activity like Rabai, and their (sometimes uneasy) incorporation into Giriama society, one of the Mijikenda societies in the hinterland. Taking the debate a step further, Marie Pierre Ballarin and Herman Kiriana analyse the memory of slavery among the Frere Town community, originally a nineteenth-century Anglican mission located in the outskirts of Mombasa that welcomed liberated Africans, Bombay Africans, and other slave fugitives. Their particular position in the ethnic landscape of today's Kenya illustrates the contemporary legacies of slave identities and the challenge of inclusion in a multicultural society. Quite interestingly, the third part of the book shifts away from the coast and proposes two pioneering contributions, one by Jean-Pierre Chrétien who discusses the contradictory position of early nineteenth-century colonial society in Burundi and Rwanda, which simultaneously opposes slave trade, and relies on traders to penetrate the hinterland; and the second by Jean-Luc Paul who depends on oral sources to place the Uluguru Mountains on the margins of the slave trading routes, while discussing their social impact in this matrilineal society.

The last part of the book brings the south-western islands of the Indian Ocean into the debate. Sophie Blanchy proposes a very detailed study of slavery in Comoros based on written and oral sources; and Samuel Sanchez tackles the issue of abolition by the French in 1849 on the islands of Sainte-Marie (today's Nosy Boraha) and Nosy Be, off the coast of Madagascar, a move opposed by rioting Sakalava leaders. Through the biography of Ratsi-

tatanina, a creole leader of slave revolts, Pier M. Larson works on Madagascar and Mauritius to re-evaluate *créolité* and to propose a new model based on the agency of subaltern people to overcome the linguistic and cultural discontinuity prevalent in colonial society. In the Mascarene Islands, Audrey Carotenuto studies a form of slave-led violence called ‘resistance-aggression’ on the basis of three cases found in legal archives, and articulates both quantitative and qualitative data to renovate our knowledge of slave resistance in the island of Réunion.

This volume is completed by fifteen maps that provide immense support to the reader, as well as twelve tables and graphics used to illustrate specific points. It can now be safely assumed that scholarship on the history of slavery and slave trade in a large expanse of East Africa and the south-west Indian Ocean has reached maturity, and we can only encourage colleagues and students to upgrade their skills in French to gain direct access to such a reference volume.

Giulia Bonacci, Institut de recherche pour le développement

GĒRMA AWGƏČČÄW DÄMMÄQÄ, ቋንቋና ነገድ በኢትዮጵያ (Q^wanq^wanna nägäd bǎ^wItyopyya, ‘Language and identity in Ethiopia’), I: የኢትዮጵያ ህዝብ ማንነትና ቅድመ-ታሪክ (ከቋንቋ አንጻር) (Yǎ^wItyopyya hǎzb manǎnnǎtǎnna qǎdmǎtarik (kǎq^wanq^wa anšǎr), ‘The identity and the prehistory of the Ethiopian people (from the perspective of the language)’ (Trenton, NJ: The Red Sea Press, 2018). 248 pp. Price: \$29.95. ISBN: 978-1-56902-598-7 (HB), 978-1-56902-599-4 (pb).

The book ቋንቋና ነገድ በኢትዮጵያ (Q^wanq^wanna nägäd bǎ^wItyopyya, ‘Language and identity in Ethiopia’), I: የኢትዮጵያ ህዝብ ማንነትና ቅድመ-ታሪክ (ከቋንቋ አንጻር) (Yǎ^wItyopyya hǎzb manǎnnǎtǎnna qǎdmǎtarik (kǎq^wanq^wa anšǎr), ‘The identity and the prehistory of the Ethiopian people (from the perspective of the language)’), in Amharic, is the first volume in the planned four-volume series dedicated to the languages and ethnic groups of Ethiopia (the second volume was also published in 2018 as GĒRMA AWGƏČČÄW DÄMMÄQÄ, ቋንቋ እና ነገድ በኢትዮጵያ (Q^wanq^wa ǎnna nägäd bǎ^wItyopyya, ‘Language and identity in Ethiopia’), II (Princeton, NJ–Lawrenceville, GA: Institute of Semitic Studies, 2018)).

The author of this series is the renowned linguist GĒrma Awgəččǎw Dǎmmǎqǎ (Girma A. Demeke), whose list of publications includes such solid monographies as *The Origin of Amharic* (2009) and *Grammatical Changes in Semitic: A Diachronic Grammar of Amharic* (2014).